THE FRONTIER

A CHRISTIAN COMMENTARY ON THE COMMON LIFE

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THE
FRONTIER
A CHRISTIAN COMMENTARY ON THE COMMON LIFE

Vol. II. No. 7. JULY 1951

Monthly Letter

THE public discussion that preceded and followed the publication of the Report of the Royal Commission on Gambling seems to have died down and may not be revived for a while. The present Parliament will hardly find time to consider legislation embodying the Commission's recommendations, though it is to be hoped that in the next Parliament the government, whatever its party complexion, will have the courage to grasp the nettle even if it is not likely to be given much credit for doing so. With this hope in view, we return to the question now, not only to round off what has been said upon it in previous numbers, but because we have recently had the advantage of hearing a discussion of the whole issue between members of the Christian Frontier Council and two of the Commissioners. Points have emerged that we should wish *Frontier* readers to bear in mind later, when legislation comes up for discussion and when the temperature in which argument takes place is very likely to rise. Moreover, the difficulties encountered by those engaged in this effort to deal with gambling are of permanent interest, they shed an instructive light upon principles that are of the first importance whenever people try, by legal means, to cope with social developments that are disquieting from an ethical point of view.

Precisely why this Commission was set up and at whose initiative is not quite clear ; but the general justification for

an enquiry was in no doubt. Obviously it was the sensational increase in the amount of gambling in Britain since the war, especially the first three years. In the last three—since 1948—there has indeed been a perceptible drop from the highest recorded estimates of gross personal expenditure on gambling of all kinds; but this seems to be a reflection of general economic conditions, not of diminished interest, for the numbers joining in football pools are still increasing. When a popular diversion assumes the dimensions of a national craze, even those who think it quite innocent in itself regard it with apprehension, and the civil power is well advised to look into the social consequences, with a view to regulative action if necessary. That was the mandate of the recent Royal Commission—to enquire into the existing law and practice about gambling, and to recommend any changes which they thought advisable after taking full account of developments since 1933.[1] To do this they had to undertake an extensive survey of the subject and produce a report which is a document of considerable social value, but their own purpose was simply the reconsideration and revision of the laws. Law is the only means by which government can modify, control or suppress activities spontaneously adopted by the subjects of the realm; and there are limits to what law can do.

Grounds for Legal Regulation

A first principle of law is that it should not prohibit what it cannot prevent. That is a principle of special importance when the legislator is dealing with an activity joined in by most of the population. About a third of the adult population, for example, make *regular* use of football pools, which are only one of the facilities for betting; and there is good evidence that the proportion of adult citizens who gamble habitually or occasionally in one way or another, or have

[1] The date of the previous Royal Commission on Lotteries and Betting.

done so, is about four out of every five. It would be fantastic for a society to expect to be able, as a body, to prevent an amusement which the great majority pursue without shame and have no personal intention of giving up. Experience shows that it is also futile. But many citizens, possibly most, regard the recent increase and present extent of gambling as socially undesirable. Here the legislators are on rather firmer ground, for it can be presumed that the public as a whole will acquiesce and even co-operate in measures designed to keep indulgence within bounds, so long as they feel that their own amusement is not being unreasonably curtailed, and that the regulations are being clearly and equitably applied to others as well as to themselves. The regulation of the drink traffic is an instance, on the whole highly successful, of the acceptance of restrictions upon a habit that the citizens as a whole would never have agreed to renounce. It is true that various kinds of resistance were offered to it that will also be raised against the control of gambling; but no one now wishes to go back to the days when anybody could start the day's work with a visit to a bar.

The Case for "Betting Shops"

One of the main concerns of this Commission, therefore, was to limit the facilities for gambling. They have made various proposals—for instance, that the number of dog-track meetings should be reduced; that pool promoters should be obliged to present accounts of their stewardship, and that off-the-course cash betting should be made legal and conducted in licensed betting offices with their hours of opening and closing strictly controlled. It has been argued that the Commission might have gone further in their restrictive proposals; but a close reading of the Report shows good reasons for their moderation.

The project for betting offices is the most likely to provoke influential opposition if and when Parliament tries to act upon it. We confess we think the case for the innovation

a good deal stronger, after a full reading and discussion of the Report, than we did when we alluded to it here last month; and we would caution any reader of ours against taking up too intransigent an attitude against the idea upon *a priori* grounds. The present prohibition of cash betting except on race-courses is a notorious failure: it only drives these transactions into the streets, into the factories and into squalid and secret haunts where they are productive of unnecessary mischief. It is a source of futile worry to the overworked police who have to keep up a show of discouraging what everyone knows they cannot stop; and it is an unfair discrimination against the poorer bettors. There is conclusive evidence that many of the evils of illicit betting disappear when cash betting is confined to licensed premises, that it can be kept under control and the scope it offers to dishonesty much restricted. The spirit of hypocrisy, unreality, and actual injustice that broods over police-court attempts to enforce a law that no one believes practicable could thus be dispelled. Even if this reform did nothing to reduce the amount of betting it would have a cleansing effect; and it will be a pity if it is defeated by the agitation of those whose moral abhorrence of all gambling makes them mistake the licensing project for a kind of state encouragement to gamble. It has been said that no legal measure which was opposed by both the bookmakers and the Churches would have the slightest chance of enactment; and there is some danger that this might be just such a measure. The best can be not only the enemy of the good, but may find itself in alliance with the worst. It is to be hoped that those Christians who are most deeply convinced that gambling is wrong in principle will carefully consider this aspect of the case before launching a campaign against the adoption by the legislature of practicable measures of regulation. Any fears that the State may be tempted to foster the gambling industry as a source of revenue, or even to institute state lotteries for the same purpose, should be relieved by a reading of the Report. Vast as is the amount

of money that changes hands through the gambling industry as a whole, governments could not make much more profit from it than they do already. With drinking and smoking, governments can control the materials of indulgence, whereas gambling can fasten itself upon any activity. The Commission's decision against state enterprise in gambling is however taken, primarily and rightly, upon the ground that it would be morally unsuitable.

The Underlying Motive

But can we hope that regulation will reverse or arrest the present growth of gambling? No reliable estimate of this kind can be made; some fears have been expressed that the reform of the football pools might make them rather more attractive to their ordinary customers; on the other hand, the legalization of betting off the course seems unlikely to increase it. The man who told one of the Commissioners that part of the fun of street betting lay in dodging the law was probably no unusual exception. We might be better able to judge the effect of regulation upon the underlying motives of gambling if more psychological study had been given to them. There is much to be said for the view that gambling is an expression, upon the useless side of life, of an indispensable human faculty. For any activity that is socially productive, not to say creative, may and frequently does involve the taking of risks, of venturing what one would rather not lose upon the hope of some much greater gain. This is a mode of social and spiritual courage necessary to the maintenance of the whole fabric of man's world—the capacity to act with faith in one's judgment, knowing that one does not know but nevertheless believing. Many a research scientist has to wager years of difficult work in the hope of proving the truth of what is only his own "hunch" and may lead either to a rich discovery or to a grievous loss of his time and labour. Every craftsman, farmer or trader has often to stake more or less heavily upon judgments which cannot be reduced to reliable estimates; and

his value as a man and a citizen depends not only upon these judgments being more right than wrong but upon his courage to act on them; and so—still more important—does his value to himself.

The Element of Skill

It is noteworthy that the gambler seldom if ever thinks of himself as wagering on pure chance alone. The real addicts even of roulette have some "system" which they believe in, or use astrology or some other method. Though the outcome may be in fact wholly fortuitous, a fit subject only for the mathematics of probability, the gambler is always pitting some superstition of his own against the universe, and if he wins he does not fail to feel that a grain of credit is due to himself, not all to luck. And in nearly all gambling games there is an element of skill or judgment, imaginary if not real. (The Royal Commission went to great trouble trying to determine whether football pool winnings depended in any degree upon skill or in fact followed the laws of probability, and in the end gave them the benefit of the doubt.) These things strongly suggest that the satisfaction found in gambling can be a kind of substitute for that of useful enterprise. In gambling, one of the loftiest capacities of man may be only stooping to play. But it may, because of frustration or discouragement, be seeking a neurotic alternative to real living.

Predisposing Causes

If this view be correct, any social change which reduced the average citizen's sphere of individual responsibility would tend to increase the popularity of gambling—meaning by "responsibility" a socially significant pursuit in which success brings real moral or material reward while failure means loss, discredit or even ruin. The alternating gains and losses of such a position, the tensions and relaxations, are the spice of life to man; they reassure him that he exists; and if he is denied responsibility he finds even a poor

imitation of its hazards better than nothing. The areas of responsibility open to most individuals have certainly been changed, many think they are reduced in the recent development of Western culture, partly because of our methods of work, and partly because the differential rewards and risks of socially useful activity are being deliberately reduced—both being pooled and vested in society as a whole. What is perhaps more important, people are kept more continuously aware of possibilities of richer and fuller life than they can see how to attain, and therefore more liable to feel frustrated. Gambling is by no means the only way in which individuals can seek unreal compensation for disemployed initiative, but it is obviously one of them, and in the circumstances a gambling industry whose net cost has risen to one per cent of the gross national income is not surprising. Nor will it be easily decreased unless social development turns in a different direction, towards the devolution of property, the re-instatement of the family and greater reliance upon individual responsibility—all of these in forms appropriate to the age. There are signs of aspiration to such a change, though it can hardly be said to have begun. We must be thankful, for the present, that skilled and thorough investigation of the world of gambling has found it somewhat less socially harmful than many had imagined, and has produced, for dealing with its more manifest evils, plans which promise some modest but worthwhile improvements.

INTERIM

The Iona Community

The report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Iona Community which had been appointed two years previously was received by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland on the 24th of May. The remit before the Committee was to devise a detailed scheme whereby the Community should be integrated within the life of the

Church of Scotland. The real difficulty of the problem was to find a way by which this integration could be accomplished while leaving sufficient freedom of experiment to the Community itself. In the past the trouble had been that the Community had no official standing either within the Church or in relation to it, and that consequently the ministers of the Church of Scotland who were devoting many years of their lives to the activities of the Community were in an ambiguous relationship to the Church. The main points of the new arrangement are as follows.

The Assembly resolved to bring the Community within the organization and jurisdiction of the Church. It appointed an Iona Community Board, to be the Governing Body for the Community directly responsible to the General Assembly. This Board will have the status of a Standing Committee within the Home Department of the Church's administration. The members of the Board shall be: Dr. George Macleod, two of the present Trustees, six of the present Sponsors of the Community, six of its present Members, and ten other Ministers or Elders.

Furthermore the Assembly approved the designation of Dr. Macleod as Founder of the Iona Community and appointed him Convener of the Board for the first five years. The post of Leader of the Community is to be continued, and in the first instance the Leader will be Dr. Macleod. The Board will direct the policies and projects of the Community and report itself annually to the General Assembly. The Community is to be responsible for the ingathering of its own finances and will submit annually to the General Assembly, for their information, a statement of its finances. After the expiry of a period of five years, the General Assembly is again to review the composition and powers of the Iona Community Board.

* * * *

The above arrangement is satisfactory to all the parties concerned, and it is felt in Scotland to be a matter for real gratification that what appears to be a workable solution for a problem that has caused many difficulties has at last been found. To some extent the new arrangement may be regarded as making history, since a way has been found by which a group of devoted servants of the Church of Scotland, who are anxious to experiment along new lines, may be allowed sufficient freedom of experiment and enterprise without feeling that they are

in any way outside the main stream of the life of the Church and without suffering any disabilities arising from what might otherwise have been a very anomalous position. The Presbyterian system of Church government is itself a very closely integrated one, and at first it seemed not entirely easy to allow room within it for sectional initiative; but the arrangement now arrived at is such as to justify the hope that not even the most rigorous sticklers for Presbyterian Church Government will feel that the principles of that government have been infringed.

* * * *

Peace by Negotiation

At a recent conference convened in the cause of World Peace, consisting mainly of representatives of various social and political groups, we found ourselves wondering whether social organizers do not sometimes underestimate the present knowledge of the public to which they appeal. The two propositions to which the platform evidently hoped the meeting would commit itself were familiar. One was that all peace talks and other mediatory efforts should be persevered in, however unpromising, or renewed if they broke down: the other was that a constructive alternative to war should be devised, in the form of an international movement for raising the living standards of indigent peoples. The public now knows too much to work confidently for these aims in any over-simplified form.

That negotiations, however unproductive or exasperating, are better than atomic war is fairly self-evident. But negotiations can be of a kind that sharpens antagonism and hastens hostilities. The American public is unlikely, for instance, to have become more peace-minded by having Gladwyn Jebb scoring-off Gromyko as a star television feature. The theatrical diplomacy of the past six years has undoubtedly educated Western populations about the character of the Soviet Power, but not in friendliness towards it, nor can the orations of the Soviet delegates have sweetened Russian feelings towards the West. It is fairly obvious that the recent "agenda" discussions in Paris and the subsequent exchanges of notes between the Powers have been inspired by the wishes of the Governments to publicize their own side of the argument, not to convert the opposing faction to it. The liberal public which once believed open diplomacy would lead straight to peace can hardly have learnt nothing by seeing what it

does lead to. Would they not be more likely to endorse a demand for some scientific study of the conditions under which " nation can speak peace to nation " ?

* * * *

Peace through Plenty

The raising of world-standards of life is also an aim not to be lightly identified with peace. Both the Western and the Eastern powers profess devotion to this aim : their rival claims to lead the world to plenty are indeed their ostensible *casus belli*. But the idea that this object is at all easily achievable by extending the benefits of scientific civilization to the poorer nations is no longer accepted as self-evident by even moderately well-read people. We have been told too much about the exploitation of the resources of nature by machine culture ; and recent African experiences in ground-nut and egg cultivation have warned us how ill-prepared we are to teach others how to grow food. There is also the population problem, which is closely connected with that of food scarcity and is in many parts of the world a factor making for war. These considerations do not, of course, make a case against raising the living standards of distressed world areas. A movement for research and education focussed upon the aims of peace and plenty is quite conceivable and it might attract support and do good. The subject is one we hope shortly to explore in *The Frontier*.

* * * *

Dr. Oldham's C.B.E.

Congratulations to Dr. J. H. Oldham upon his inclusion in the King's Birthday Honours ! His Companionship of the Order of the British Empire is a gratification to *Frontier* readers and all those who know of the distinguished work in educational and religious fields for which this distinction is conferred upon him.

THE PERSONAL SIDE OF HOUSING

An Address given by Mr. Henry Brooke, M.P., to a Frontier Luncheon meeting at the Royal Empire Society, London, on June 6, 1951

A KEEN sense of responsibility about the living conditions which many of our fellow men and women have to endure is of comparatively recent growth. There were always the isolated individuals who felt like that, but housing was not a great national issue moving the emotions and the minds of the country as a whole until within, say, these last 50 years. That sense of responsibility is even yet not nearly keen enough. Such as there is has been largely sharpened by Christian thinking and Christian influence.

I look forward to the time when Christian restlessness about the unworthy conditions in which hundreds of thousands of people all around us are having to live will be far more widespread than it is even to-day. Upon every Government, whatever its colour—upon the housing committee of every local authority, whatever its size—upon everybody concerned with the building and upkeep of houses and dwellings in which people can live, there ought to be unremitting pressure of opinion from the whole body of Christian laymen and clergy: unremitting pressure until a state of affairs is brought about in which there are no longer any dwellings so dilapidated or so overcrowded or so bleak that they are an offence to God.

The Objective is Attainable

There have been vast improvements in this country of ours during the present century. These vast improvements have suffered two terrible setbacks because of the two wars, each of which has halted the building of new houses for five years or more. In both of those periods we have slipped back grievously, because it is obvious that there are houses decaying all the time, and extensive building is needed steadily from year to year if one is merely to fill the gap left

by the houses which are becoming no longer habitable. The encouraging thing is that, if we are spared a third war, within the lifetime of at any rate the younger of us, it should be within our grasp to make sure of there being in this country a reasonably modern and well-built house for every family that wants one. In other words, we have the chance to make the slum vanish, as we have made cholera vanish. The idea of the existence of slums and poor conditions is so much a part of our normal thinking that it needs an effort of the mind to realize that their abolition is one of the objectives which is definitely attainable, at any rate in England, within the next fifty years.

Consequences of Apathy

But that will not just happen of itself. What it will require is many people continually taking strong decisions—decisions, I mean, that require strength, decisions some of which may be definitely unpopular. It will depend on the formation and strengthening of public opinion—particularly public opinion locally, because it is locally that things have to happen. If one accepts that, who should be in the forefront of forming and moulding and inspiring public opinion but those of us who call ourselves Christians, who believe that we as Christians have a special understanding of what family life ought to be, and can be made to be? I know that there have been a number of great champions of housing reform among the clergy in these last 30 or 40 years. Personalities spring to mind, Father Jellicoe, Mr. Jenkinson of Leeds, the present Archbishop of York; one could name others. But those few stand out like mountain peaks among the rest of us. If all Christian congregations everywhere had been as determined about this as those individuals were, if we had all maintained as firmly as they did that one can hardly take pride in Christian teaching about modesty and chastity if one does not flame with anger against conditions which endanger those virtues to the point of making them almost unattainable—conditions

where grown-up sons and daughters are forced to sleep in the same room, where parents are obliged to have their children with them in their bedroom until the children grow quite old—if Christian England had said, these last thirty years, to its Members of Parliament and its local councillors, "You must move quicker in this," they would have moved quicker. More would have happened, more ground would have been gained by 1939, more would be happening at this very moment.

There is this one advantage to-day. It is easier for awareness of housing problems to be aroused now than it was, because there has been a geographical change since 1939. By that date the worst housing conditions had been largely (not entirely) mitigated, though shocking overcrowding and slum conditions still persisted in particular localities and isolated spots—in London, the East End and the riverside boroughs, in slum districts in other large towns and cities, in Tyneside (notorious for bad overcrowding), the Durham coalfield, and so on. Because these places were isolated, unless one travelled about or read of them one might not in those days have had a chance to take the measure of the problem. But now, since 1939, through the wartime stoppage of building everywhere, and partly through the fact that sometimes the most overcrowded areas were those that suffered most from bombing, the mire of bad housing conditions is no longer collected in foul local pools. It is spread more widely over the country as a whole, and therefore is easier for everybody to perceive. At this moment it is much worst in the big cities; but there is hardly a parish in the whole country where a man and a girl can get engaged without almost desperate anxiety as to where they are going to live when they marry.

Waiting Lists and Priorities

It is that shift in the nature of the problem which I want to dwell on for a few minutes, from the personal angle. Let us take that man and girl who have got engaged. They

may go to the housing manager of the Local Council about a house. They will be told that the Council has a waiting list and that it operates a points scheme, designed to bring to the top of the list those with the greatest housing need. One gets so many points for overcrowding, so many points for T.B. or other illness in the family, so many points for old age, for service in the Forces, for years on the waiting list, and so on. It is all worked out. And when the man and the girl ask how many points they will qualify for, the answer is likely to be, " Very few." Local authorities would like to help, but the priority claims are too many. To want to get married is a state which ought to be a state of blessedness. But actually, in this context, it is a state of being regarded as having practically no housing need at all—or rather having a housing need which, at any rate in the big towns, has to rank almost nowhere in comparison with the high priority needs of those families who are already living in barely tolerable conditions.

I was looking the other day at the particulars of families at the top of the waiting list in a local authority area, not by any means what one would normally think of as a slum area, and here are some of the cases that caught my eye: two grown-ups and three children living in one room; two grown-ups and five children living in two rooms; wife and children living together, the father elsewhere because there is no room for him with the family; an old lady with arthritis and heart trouble living on a top floor and unable to get a ground-floor room, with the result that she can never go out; two grown-ups and two children living in one room, the wife with T.B. That is a random sample of an actual list. They do not compare in hardship with the worst instances one could have found in slums in days gone past. But they typify the present housing problem in personal terms, and they fairly represent the kind of families whom—quite apart from slum clearance, which is a different matter—the ordinary local authority in a larger town is struggling now to rehouse.

The purpose and the value of operating a points scheme, to bring the neediest to the top, are plain to see. One may overlook the disadvantages. It may discourage effort; if you have a lot of points it may be wiser not to try to move into slightly better conditions, because then you may lose points that you had before, and put off for ever your chance of getting to the top of the list and qualifying for one of the new flats built by the Council. Or it may stimulate cheating; you can temporarily overcrowd yourself with sisters-in-law and other relatives when you think that the housing manager is coming round to check up on your present accommodation. You may be driven to other devices; I hardly think that the Christian view of the approach to marriage was represented in a letter I actually received from a widower about his housing problem, who mentioned quite casually that he had recently married a widow with two children " to make his case more deserving ".

Two Approaches to the Scarcity Problem

The last thing I want to do is to find myself in party controversy in the columns of *The Frontier*, but for the sake of clarity one should here put on record a definite difference of approach that there is between the political parties to some of these matters. One political philosophy says that the paramount necessity is to see that all new houses and flats go to the people who can show the greatest housing need, because anything other than that might cause public scandal. and would be an infringement of the principle of fair shares. The other approach is to stress production, so to speak, even more than distribution, and to say that the paramount need is to secure the building of the maximum number of new houses and flats, so as to get the whole housing pool enlarged as rapidly as possible; and even if some of them do not go to the people at the top of the list, yet those who do move into the new dwellings will be vacating room elsewhere, and so giving others a chance to move up a step.

But what I want now is to follow what may happen in the minds of the family who actually get an offer of a flat. I use the word " flat " purposely. It is a fact which all who are trying to apply Christian ideas to family life must recognize, that as years go on the great cities of this country are going to have to be redeveloped almost entirely with flats. There are scarcely any new houses being built or likely to be built within the County of London, and the same is true of the inner parts of all other big cities. The principal causes of that are the high cost of land, and the lack of any further sites available for development, and the consequent need to secure the greatest possible density of dwellings on each site that the local authority will allow. Therefore, if these people we are thinking of live in a great city, they are likely to be told that the only chance of a Council house is by going far out, where bus or rail fares into town will be heavy. If they want to stay in the city, they must reconcile themselves to a flat ; and usually that is the right phrase, because nine-tenths of the families, if they had the choice, would prefer a house.

The Problems of Flat-Life

That imposes on us the responsibility of thinking how the disadvantages of flat-life can be minimized. It is exceedingly important to ask that question before the flats are planned and not afterwards, because large blocks of flats are difficult to alter radically afterwards. One must ask it first and foremost for the benefit of the children, because we think of children in connexion with a bit of garden or open space, even if the open space is only the road, and in blocks of flats we may be putting them away from all those things. We need to bear in mind also that the new blocks of flats which are going up nowadays are not to house people removed from slums that have been pulled down. They are literally to house everybody—everybody whose housing needs have brought them to the top of the list—and if you go into many of these modern Council flats you will be struck

both by the high standard of furnishing in them and by the social effect that their " newness " is having on families who have not had the chance of living with such amenities before. And yet things are missing—things that the children need, things that old people need, things that everyone needs (such as to get away from noise).

What about the use of the space round the flats? Deserts of asphalt are all too common. It is fairly well agreed nowadays that the happiest course is to have two playgrounds, not right in the middle among the flats: a small playground for little children below school age, where they can " mess about ", and secondly a sufficiently large enclosed space where older children can play ball games. Unless that is planned for, one is unlikely to solve the problems of noise, and of windows getting broken, and of the constant disturbance which it causes if all the boys and girls are playing all over the open courtyard.

Gardens: is there any chance of laying out some of the space round the flats so that those tenants who want them can have an individual garden or an allotment, or must that side of family life go uncatered for because the gardens will never be a success? Is it right for the local authority to spend a great deal of money on keeping all the grounds beautifully tended, or is it better to hand them all over to the tenants or to a tenants' society to look after, with perhaps lower standards of achievement but a more direct personal interest in what is done? Are we to say that, as London is to become a city of flat dwellers, the keeping of dogs and cats and other pets (usually prohibited in Council flats, on grounds of nuisance to other tenants) is to cease? If so, that is going to make a radical difference to something in home life which the British have always regarded as rather good. What can be done to eliminate noise, and assist privacy? What can we do to make sure that a real life can be lived in these flats—something more than merely having a roof over one's head? I could take you to several housing estates consisting of large blocks of flats where, in

deference to a recommendation in an official report, a mortuary has at some expense been provided. The mortuary is never used, and if the money had been spent on a room which could be hired for birthday and wedding parties it would have been so much more appreciated.

Those are just a selection of the points which need to be thought out in advance, because mistakes, especially mistakes of omission, once they are made, may be exceedingly hard to rectify afterwards ; and social workers will tell you that the result is more likely to be successful if you think of these things before the people arrive, than if you come along when a certain social pattern has been established on an estate, and try to alter or modernize something. Are we going to recognize as a good development, a growth which may serve a social purpose of which Christians would approve, the coming into existence of tenants' societies and tenants' associations, or are bodies like that liable to do more harm than good, or is it better that each family should keep itself to itself, face its own problems and form its own individual links ? I simply put such questions on the record as matters worth thinking over, particularly in these days when we have now had some years' experience of new building since the war, and have the chance to take stock of the experiments made in those five years, and to see how for the future we can eliminate the mistakes and perpetuate the successes.

" *Mixed Development* "

Talk to any of the housing experts, and they will tell you that the ideal is " mixed development ". By that phrase the architect may mean a mixture of houses and flats, and the social worker may mean something else, and the local authority may mean something different. But what is primarily in my mind is that people of different outlooks and different backgrounds shall be close enough together so that they have an opportunity in daily life of growing to understand one another. That wholly desirable state of

things can well exist in a village ; it certainly does exist in villages where the clergy are doing their job. In urban life to-day the isolation may be worsening rather than diminishing ; the neighbourhoods in which people of different backgrounds and different income levels live may become more and more separated and cut off from one another. Nobody now can look with real approval on some of the enormous housing estates of twenty or thirty years ago, built all for people of one income level. But may we not now be repeating in some other direction just the same sort of mistake, for which the next generation will hold us to blame ?

What can one Do ?

Well, all I can offer is one or two suggestions. Can we, each of us, play some part in our own locality in helping to make sure that the people who carry influence in housing matters there give intelligent thought to some of these questions ? Do not let any of us imagine that we can just wander along to the Town Clerk and tell him how the job ought to be done. If we do not know much about it yet, let us start learning before we try to teach ; that is a lesson which all Christians who wish to play a part in social reform should learn. But at this moment we will find ideas in a formative stage, and we shall find many members of local authorities keen to find the right answers. If any of us wish to develop our experience and form our own judgments, in London a special opportunity offers itself to take an active part in some of the great housing societies and trusts—St. Pancras, St. Marylebone, Kensington, Westminster, Chelsea and others.

But, apart from questions of gaining knowledge or exerting pressure on housing authorities, we can all in our own ways do something to break down the isolation that is liable to be the curse of new housing development. A new block of flats goes up ; families from far away move into it ; there are few links with the neighbourhood around. Let us make it our job to help create those links. Let us be

sure that we know the flats and get to know the people in them—and if we cannot find ways of doing that, there must be something wrong with our initiative and our resourcefulness. Let us earn the compliment of being invited by the tenants' association to the next Christmas party for the children in those flats—not regarding ourselves as people who have something to confer on the newcomers, but as people who have something to learn ourselves, by which we can make the life of those newcomers fuller and richer and happier. And if we have no great blocks of flats near to us, there are probably people living in houses requisitioned if not built by the Council, who may feel alien among us; by showing an interest, even if only to the extent of lending a pair of shears to clip a shrub or hedge, we can break down the isolation which, if we allow it to persist, is going to stand as a fearful obstruction in the way of the making and moulding of Christian England.

All I have said is that these problems are on our doorsteps now, that there is much for all of us to learn, that even without specialized knowledge we can find a practical part to play, and that by so doing we shall be achieving something towards the Christian ideal of making us all members one of another.

ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL

TWO recent publications, a report by P.E.P. called *The Football Industry*[1] and a Tribune pamphlet by Mr. J. P. W. Mallalieu, M.P. called *This Football Business*[2] have drawn attention to the peculiar place of Association Football in the life of this country. This is to be welcomed because that place has received surprisingly little attention from the "serious" press and periodicals of this country. With the honourable exception of the *Manchester Guardian*, these papers are disposed to encourage the fond illusion cherished by the new breed of self-consciously literary sports writers that the national game of England is cricket, with Rugby football in the close season, and that of Scotland golf. If, however, our standard be that of the number of people involved, intensity of interest evoked, richness of tradition and quality of achievement, Association Football is far ahead of all rivals in its claim to be considered as the chief national sport of all the British.[3]

Mr. Mallalieu's pamphlet is much the livelier, but to the person who knows very little about football, the P.E.P. Report will be the more informative introduction. It duly emphasizes how important football is as an entertainment industry, producing an impressive array of facts, figures and tables to back up its assertions. Over a million people watch the more important football matches on any normal Saturday afternoon during the season, and many hundreds of thousands more either play in local leagues or watch

[1] Published in two parts as the February 26th and March 5th, 1951, issues of *Planning* (P.E.P., 16 Queen Anne's Gate, S.W. 1).

[2] Published by Tribune Publications, 222 The Strand, W.C. 2. 6d.

[3] The only part of Britain where this might be challenged is South Wales, where Rugby has a genuine popular following, but even there it is doubtful whether it has more support than Soccer. A few districts in the North of England are wedded to Northern Union Rugby but they are only a few.

innumerable smaller teams. The larger clubs are considerable employers of labour and owners of property. So deep is the interest in the game and so involved in the fortunes of their club are spectators that production in some industrial areas is noticeably affected when the local team is doing badly.

All this is true and interesting but it would be a pity if Christians anxious to know more about one of the most absorbing leisure-time preoccupations of large sections of the community were to imagine that all they need to know has been said in these two publications. For the story of the development of football as a national game is of notable interest to the student of the influence of Christian institutions in this country. A large proportion—I have not the information to say whether it is a majority, but it may be—of the leading football clubs of this country grew up out of Sunday School or church-associated teams which were started in the nineteenth century. This has had an influence on the development of the game which, as far as I know, has not yet received much attention from any quarter, but which is profound and far-reaching, not least when it is quite unconscious.

This influence can be most obviously traced in the character of the people who are ultimately responsible for the organization of the game, the officials of the Football Association and the Football League and the directors of the large clubs. Many of these are the lineal descendants of the kind of people who would have been asked to be Presidents of Sunday School clubs a couple of generations ago, provincial solicitors and business men who were local preachers. And while it is true that, nowadays especially, there are probably as many brewers as there are church deacons on the board of most large football clubs, the outlook of people of the type I have described still pervades the administration of the game to a remarkable degree.

The first indication of this is the very striking fact that no player registered by the Football Association is allowed

to take part in Sunday football in this country. The rule is relaxed for visits of English teams to the continent, where Sunday football is the rule in both Protestant and Catholic countries. The teams seen at play in parks on Sunday afternoon are outlaws as far as the F.A. is concerned and the enclosed grounds are not open to them. When the great popularity of soccer with the people who go to Sunday cinemas is remembered, this is a remarkable fact. As far as I know, there is no serious pressure being placed on the F.A. at present to permit Sunday football.

The second indication of this influence is not as well-known by Church people as it should be. The organizers of Football will have nothing to do with the Pools and they are the Pools' most vigorous and effective opponents. The Pools are organized on the basis of forecasts of the results of the League football matches to be played on the following Saturday. These forecasts have to be posted to the Pools Promoters to arrive not later than the Friday morning before the Saturday. Shortly before the war, the Football League went so far as to cancel the fixtures for the following Saturdays on several successive Fridays and to arrange a different set, thus making all the Pools entries for these weeks worthless. They were, of course, unable to keep this up indefinitely but it was an extraordinarily courageous attempt, at great inconvenience and expense, to break the power of the Pools. Similarly, a short time ago the Pools Promoters' Association tried to buy the goodwill of the F.A. by offering to make a gift of £250,000 to be used for the development of the game. It was rejected.

I am sure that many ministers and clergy in local situations where football affairs are closely followed must have publicly commended these actions on the part of the leaders of the game. But I doubt whether they were made to feel that they had the sympathy and encouragement of the churches as a whole in these matters. And I must confess to feeling a measure of indignation when good Christians, and sometimes Church leaders, lump together an interest

in football and the Pools as though they were the same thing. Only 51 per cent of those who attend big football matches bet on the Pools, and when the number of people in general who bet on the Pools is remembered that is a more significant figure than it sounds, and those who organize the game are determined to keep it clear of the Pools. They deserve the informed support of all Christians concerned for the standard of ordinary life in this country.

The third point at which this influence shows itself is subtler. The P.E.P. Report makes much of the fact that football nowadays is big business. Perhaps it makes too much of this fact, as it recognizes itself when it remarks in the concluding section that it is unlike other big businesses in that directors and share-holders make practically nothing out of it and their chief interest is not profit but sporting success. Still, there is a great deal of money in a sport which attracts such crowds. What is remarkable, however, is the extent to which the extravagant values and false standards associated with other successful forms of popular entertainment are kept out of football. That this is so is often concealed by the publicity given to the one instance in which the methods common in other forms of entertainment break into the football world, that of the transfer system. Every time a star player is transferred for £25–£30,000 it is head-line news and the ill-informed conclude that football is governed purely by finance. That is, however, far from the truth. The transfer system certainly needs reform, although a respectable case can be made for its retention, and many of the clubs are agitating for its reform. But even the player who is transferred for £30,000[1]

[1] It is the transferring club who get the £30,000, apart from a small percentage in lieu of benefit for the player. The player cannot be transferred without his consent and if he is in the £30,000 class he is rarely transferred except at his own instance. Most of the £30,000 will probably be spent in buying other players or, in the case of a poor club, in meeting general expenses. It hardly ever reaches the directors' pockets.

ceives no more for playing football than the maximum age permitted by the rules of the League, together with few minor extra benefits. That wage is to be raised from £12 to £14 a week next season, a good weekly wage by orking-class standards but far removed from the fabulous ms earned by film stars or boxers or American baseball layers. When it is remembered that players like Stanley Matthews of Blackpool or Bert Williams of Wolverhampton Wanderers have an international following comparable in size nd superior in discrimination to Bing Crosby and Joe Louis, will be seen how different the standards prevailing in ootball are from those in other forms of entertainment. More than that, a certain puritan disapproval quickly sserts itself against those footballers who go after "the ig money". Certain promoters in Bogota, South America, empted several well-known players away from Britain a ear or so ago with fat contracts. This roused considerable ndignation in football circles, which turned to satisfaction hen most of the culprits returned home disillusioned after few months.

In all this, I do not wish to draw too idealized a picture f the present state of football. Even though it is a singularly wholesome and well-run game, it is still only a game, nd too much attention to it distracts many young people rom concern with graver matters. And both the P.E.P. eport and Mr. Mallalieu are worried about the appearance f a new type of director in some clubs since the war, people ho know more about the workings of the black-market an about the traditions of football. Nevertheless, Christian eople who are sometimes inclined to make excessively weeping generalizations about the corruption and false alues which pervade secular society do well to remember at here is one large-scale public entertainment which has een kept relatively free of them. It is a modest frontier ut a peculiarly exposed one, especially now that football is apidly establishing itself as the most popular sport in the hole world. Its rules and its particular spirit were formed

very directly under Christian inspiration. It is worth a little of the time and energy of Christian people who enjoy the game to see that they are kept like that.

DANIEL JENKINS.

IS THE CHURCH INTERESTED IN WHAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN TO MANKIND?

THERE is a widespread impression that the right answer to this question is: no. The Church appears to be interested in the individual soul and the future life, and in its own well-being as an institution. It seems uninterested in the problems of mankind as such, and therefore cannot have a word of power to speak to the whole race of men. And, to substantiate this impression, there is a sufficiently strong tendency for Christians to contract out of life, and to limit their message to the faithful.

But from time to time voices are raised in protest. At the beginning of the century the Congregationalist theologian, P. T. Forsyth, was insisting that only if the Gospel was given its full stature on the scale of all humanity could it meet and master the wide ranging problems of the twentieth century. "It is," he said, "the authority of grace saving the guilty conscience, and not only the miserable heart, and saving the conscience of a race"—that is, the whole human race—"by the power of a society"—that is, the Church—"into the obedience of a kingdom".[1]

This emphasis is powerfully reinforced and richly illustrated by the French Jesuit thinker, Henri de Lubac, in his book: *Catholicism: a study of Dogma in relation to the corporate destiny of mankind*.[2] Fr. de Lubac writes as a

[1] *The Principle of Authority*, p. 338.

[2] Burns Oates and Washbourne, 1950. The English translation is not as well done as it might have been, and those who read French are recommended to get the original, viz. *Catholicisme: les aspects sociaux du dogme*. Les Editions du Cerf, Paris.

Christian of the Roman obedience, but there is little in his fundamental argument which need raise the issue of specific church loyalty.[1] He writes for the instruction of "believers", to ask whether Christians do really acknowledge the full scope and power of their own faith. The world may not be willing to accept the Church's message about the life of mankind, but that is no justification for scaling down the range of God's promise. And this we lamentably do.

Fr. de Lubac puts what he has to say in the setting of the new scientific researches into the nature of the universe, which enhance the importance of Christian truth. Though the Bible and ancient Christian writers were without the knowledge of the vast duration and immense variety of both the universe and human history which modern science has made available, yet what they taught can embrace the whole universe and all mankind within its purview. Astronomical discoveries, for instance, which at first disturbed and shocked the faithful, may now be seen to have freed Christian thought from the confines of the ancient cosmology which was ill-suited to its genius, and to open up an altogether grander view of God's work in creation and redemption. And this is still more true of our fresh knowledge of the history of mankind.

Fr. de Lubac also takes into account the great variety of human religions which have been so fully disclosed to us during the last century or so. He sees the Church as able to do justice to the good that there is in all religions: to purify and to give fresh life to them. He rejects indignantly the idea that there are certain religions which Christianity cannot penetrate, that it is ultimately linked up with a culture and ways of thought that are not universal. Rather he insists:[2] "Catholicism is religion itself. It is the form

[1] The word "Catholicism" is used in the title of the book not as the negative of Protestantism, but in the positive sense in which all Christians say they believe in "the holy Catholic Church".

[2] pp. 153, 154.

that humanity must put on finally to be itself." "The Church, trusting in the Holy Spirit that leads her, trusts also all the people that she comes to free. That is no sign of *naiveté* on her part. She realizes that all races are not at the same cultural level, that not all afford the same possibilities. But she knows too, that all men are one in community of their divine origin and destiny."

In this setting Fr. de Lubac asks: *Is the concern of the Gospel the salvation of the human race?* and illustrates his affirmative answer, especially from the Fathers. "For Irenaeus, as indeed for Origen, Gregory Nazianzen, Gregory of Nyssa, for Cyril of Alexandria, Maximus, Hilary and others, the lost sheep of the Gospel that the Good Shepherd brings back to the fold is no other than the whole of human nature." [1] The mystery of the Gospel is that all men are *one new man* in Christ. "Humanity is one, organically one, by its divine structure; it is the Church's mission to reveal to men that pristine unity that they have lost, to restore and complete it." [2] Her sacraments are instruments of unity by which man may be united with God and with his fellow man. "As the Spirit of Christ came down upon the apostles, not to unite them in a closed group but to light within them the fire of universal charity, so does he still, whenever Christ delivers himself up once more 'that the scattered children of God may be gathered together'". Our Churches are the "upper room" where not only is the Last Supper renewed but Pentecost also".[3] And the last end of man is no solitary attaining to the vision of the divine essence: for the Christian tradition has always looked on heaven as a city—the City of God. "There the saints dwell in fellowship and rejoice in common; their joy is derived from their community." [4] "The work of God, the work of Christ, is one. In these different states—militant, suffering, triumphant—there is, all the same, but one Church. We can never realize this too keenly. But if we take our stand,

[1] p. 3. [2] p. 19. [3] p. 50. [4] p. 51.

as we must, in the temporal order which is ours here below, we must surely affirm that the one and only Church will remain incomplete until the last day. The Gospel and the Church are given to fulfil for mankind the destiny he has appointed.

This is the second question: *Does the Church save men out of history or embody the common destiny of all mankind?* Fr. de Lubac insists that there are a multitude of voices affirming an individualist doctrine of escape. "Amid this universal chorus Christianity alone continues to assert the transcendent destiny of man and the common destiny of mankind. If the salvation offered by God is in fact the salvation of the human race, since this human race lives and develops in time, any account of this salvation will naturally take a historical form—it will be the history of the penetration of humanity by Christ." [1]

This is what the Bible means by "salvation": this is how it interprets history. It is true that "the problem of the salvation of unbelievers" has confronted the Christian conscience in tragic guise as a consequence of successive discoveries in geography, history and pre-history, which, while they immeasurably increase the sum of human achievement, seem to diminish in proportion the achievement of Christ. [2] The solution of this is to see that the formula "outside the Church no salvation" means not "outside the Church you are damned" but "it is by the Church and by the Church alone that you will be saved". "For it is through the Church that salvation will come, that it is already coming to mankind." [3]

This is how de Lubac expounds his vision: "Peace upon the world, unity of all peoples in the service and praise of Jahwe: That is no dream, it is the word of God. No afflictions and disappointments can ever make us doubt that. The Church realizes full well that she will never triumph completely over evil, that is, disunion. She knows that

[1] p. 69. [2] p. 106. [3] p. 118.

" the state of war ", since its principle is in the hearts of us all, will be to the end that state of our earthly condition. . . . as she expands the Church discovers the world within herself, a subtler threat. She knows, too, that man's most certain and glorious triumphs always contain an equivocal element. The " mystery of iniquity " has not yet wrought its greatest destruction, and the Church, as in all ages of her history, perhaps more than ever to-day, can see its formidable shadow growing larger. So it is that, despite the ever-recurring illusions of those won for her cause but incompletely imbued with her Spirit, she awaits no other triumph than that of her Bridegroom who reigned from the Cross—but there is a " beyond " to her Cross in time itself. . . . Her outlook remains, as it was in her early days, essentially eschatological. Nevertheless, here on earth she is tireless in attempting the impossible. . . . But the universal establishment of christendom, even supposing that so unlooked-for an event had taken place, could never be more than a pale and remote prefiguration of the final unity, the whole world taken up by man and made one with his destiny—man in his turn, in the whole stupendous complexity of his history, taken up by the Church ; the world made spiritual by man, and man consecrated by the Church ; the Church in fine, holy, spiritual, world wide, like an immense ship laden with all the fruits of the earth, will enter upon eternity." [1]

At the end of the book Fr. de Lubac faces an objection : *If the Gospel is a corporate salvation, can we do justice to the worth of the person and the reality of the transcendent God ?* and answers it with an emphatic affirmative. It is by way of the personal that this corporate salvation is carried out, and it provides the setting in which personal living will grow to its fullness. And it is only if the transcendent God is acknowledged that we can have any confidence in the achievement of the social destiny towards which we strive. " If modern men are so *absent* from each other, it is primarily because

[1] pp. 138–39.

they are absent from themselves, since they have abandoned the Eternal which alone establishes them in being and enables them to communicate with one another."

Two criticisms may spring to the mind when we reflect upon de Lubac's thesis. It may be said that he follows the fathers in thinking of humanity as a Platonic universal, in a way we cannot do. But may it not be that the Fathers laid hold of a truth, which we may find more difficult to express, but which is yet indispensable to our true understanding of man. Does not the Christ stand as the centre of history and gather all history into the meaning which he gives to life? Can we restrict the meaning of Christ to anything less than life for every human being?

Or we may be told that de Lubac has kept hidden "the mystery of the Cross" of which he speaks only at the end of his book,[1] and that he has not dwelt enough on the wrath of God which is against all unrighteousness of men. Perhaps so. Certainly there is a paradox here. What de Lubac says is:[2] "Whatever is revealed on this subject at the Last Day one thing is certain: the Church will not enter maimed into the Kingdom. According to the Jewish legend, when Lot's wife had been turned into a pillar of salt one or other of her limbs was continually being torn away, but by some marvel by instantaneous reparation she yet remained whole. . . . So it is with humanity itself: no falling away will leave any gap in it. It is as nothing in the face of its fullness." This may not be convincing as logic. Yet unless, whatever the mystery of iniquity and the certainty of judgment, the Church can proclaim that the victory of God in Christ is a victory which shall be brought to fruition in mankind as a whole; what has it to say to the conflicts of a struggling world? The crisis of our present time must lead our world either nearer to or farther away from the fulfilment of its manifest and inevitable destiny—the penetration of humanity by Christ. But will the world be grateful for such a con-

[1] p. 206. [2] p. 141.

viction? Perhaps not, but at least the Church must keep clearly before itself that its Gospel is meant to bring the conflicts of humanity into harmony with the will of God—that the whole life of the world is related to the purpose and victory of God. No true word which the Church can speak can eliminate that element of difficulty which is also the source of redemption—that in Biblical faith God is no longer at the circumference of life but at the centre claiming our obedience and our love as the fruit of the life he gives. But the Church, in its living testimony to the presence of God, must make perfectly clear beyond any shadow of doubt that its concern is not with a limited section of human life, but with the whole life of man.

H. CUNLIFFE-JONES.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

CHINA

Dear Sirs,

I have now had time to study the special China number of *The Frontier*, and would like to express again my thanks to you and to the Editorial Board for the extra work involved in such a number. If I express the following points in criticism I hope you will not allow these to outweigh my gratitude.

Within the limited space available in one number much must of necessity be omitted. I do feel, however, that the historical development of the present position might have been at least indicated in outline. There have been very different phases in this development. Is it not perhaps rather ungracious on the part of a foreign assessment that no mention should be made of the fact that not a few Chinese Christians have already died as martyrs for their new faith and that very many more have suffered grieviously for their refusal to deny their faith.

I realize too that, because of condensation, it is difficult to present a picture that does not appear contradictory in some of its details. The situation too is in actual fact very uneven. But on a wider view

my personal reaction to the situation as it is described by "Observator" would be that, if it is a true picture, it is hard to see how any part of the Christian Church would wish to co-operate with the Peking Government. On this there are other points of view but the following should I think be said somewhere. The Christian Church in China has paid dearly for its close association with the Kuomintang: the same will become increasingly true of close association with the Communist Government. It may be said that even those who have in the past lived for years in China and who now live elsewhere have no right to make any suggestions to their Chinese friends in this present predicament. On the other hand, those who have lived under the deluge of propaganda of recent years in China, and who now reside in a less tortured atmosphere have a duty to express opinions, which they feel their own Chinese friends might in like circumstances feel and express.

The demand by the Communists for co-operation and active support for their programme is a demand for total acceptance. This raises the deepest issues and it may be that all are not equally clear on what it involves. In a recent report dealing with Communism generally without special reference to China, the following sentence occurs: "The Communist Party does not accept the parliamentary system although it is willing under certain circumstances to use it, but always as an expedient with the purpose of destroying it." The same is true of communism in China. It would surely be less than our duty as Christians not to express our conviction that, as we see it from a distance outside the area of direct propaganda, the Christian church will be used, but with the same sinister end in view—its destruction. Christian values and communist values will not permit of synthesis, until such time as the value of the individual is recognized and man's essential relationship to God conceded.

But when this has been said, something else must be added and this I regret has not found very much place in the special number. A more humble recognition of the failure of the great Christian enterprise in China to excite and hold the enthusiasm of Young China would have been only fitting. And in this must come I think some recognition of our corporate responsibility for the present situation, its future development and the untold misery that lies ahead. I do not believe that Christ does not have that power of attraction for young China. For the future it would be wiser for us to recognize that as a Christian missionary body we failed in our expression of the total

picture, and it has been rejected by many. The China situation is not so unique that what happened there may not happen—perhaps in other forms—elsewhere. Would it not be wiser to find just where we placed our emphasis wrongly? Is it not possible that we were too little concerned to find the implications of our faith in a Chinese environment? May it not have been that we were too satisfied with the way of life built up in the West and imagined that it expressed in fair measure a Christian way of life?

There is perhaps little that we can now do directly in the Chinese situation except to remember our former colleagues in prayer. But for other fields, and here at home, do our methods not need re-thinking?

H. S. D. GARVEN.

GAMBLING

Dear Editors,

I find myself, as I suppose, in very full agreement with the substance of Mr. Maurice Reckitt's letter to you on gambling, but would draw your attention and his to two offences in that letter. The first is in respect of "Puritan timidity" in regard to indulgences. The classical Puritans, like some of the religious Orders in Catholicism, might lie open to the charge of a certain undue rigourism, but "timidity" is about the least appropriate charge that could be laid against them. Second, Mr. Reckitt suggests that it is because he does not regard himself as a Protestant Christian that he does not expect to find in scripture categorical answers to moral problems. There may be Protestant Christians who have that expectation, though I do not meet them. The only large denomination that supposes that there are categorical answers to moral problems is the Roman Church, but that, to be sure, does not look to the Bible for the answer.

Yours faithfully,

NATHL. MICKLEM.

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